



City and County of the City of Exeter.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

School Medical Officer

FOR THE

CITY AND COUNTY OF
THE CITY OF EXETER

1944



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SCHOOL MEDICAL STAFF.

School Medical Officer and Medical Officer of Health :

GEORGE F. B. PAGE, M.D., D.P.H., Edin.

Assistant School Medical Officers :

JESSIE SMITH, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H. Leeds.

IRIS V. I. WARD, M.D. London, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

BENJAMIN T. JONES, L.M.S.A., D.P.H. (Acting Deputy Medical Officer of Health).

School Dental Surgeon :

GEORGE VALENTINE SMALLWOOD, L.D.S., Eng.

Assistant School Dental Surgeon :

HORACE J. V. WEBSTER, L.D.S., Eng. (Temporary).

School Nurses (also Health Visitors) :

Miss C. A. KNUCKEY.

Miss B. M. KNUCKEY.

Miss M. M. FOY.

Miss D. HICKSON.

Miss A. H. EDDS.

Miss F. L. GRAY (left 30/11/44).

Miss M. E. BLACK (Temporary).

Mrs. F. M. HOCKING (Temporary).

Miss F. L. GIBBONS (Appointed 17/1/44).

Dental Attendants :

Miss E. I. ROSE (Temporary).

Mrs. E. A. M. KNEE (Temporary).

Clerks :

W. G. LOTT (Joined H.M. Forces, 14/9/44).

Mrs. D. V. M. WILSON (Temporary) : (Appointed 27/9/44).

Mrs. M. E. BELL (Temporary) : (Appointed 30/5/44—Left 4/11/44).

Mrs. R. CLARKE (Temporary) : (Left 29/8/44).

Miss M. BUCK (Temporary) : (Appointed 27/11/44).

Miss B. E. D. BURROUGHS (Temporary) : (Appointed 7/2/44).

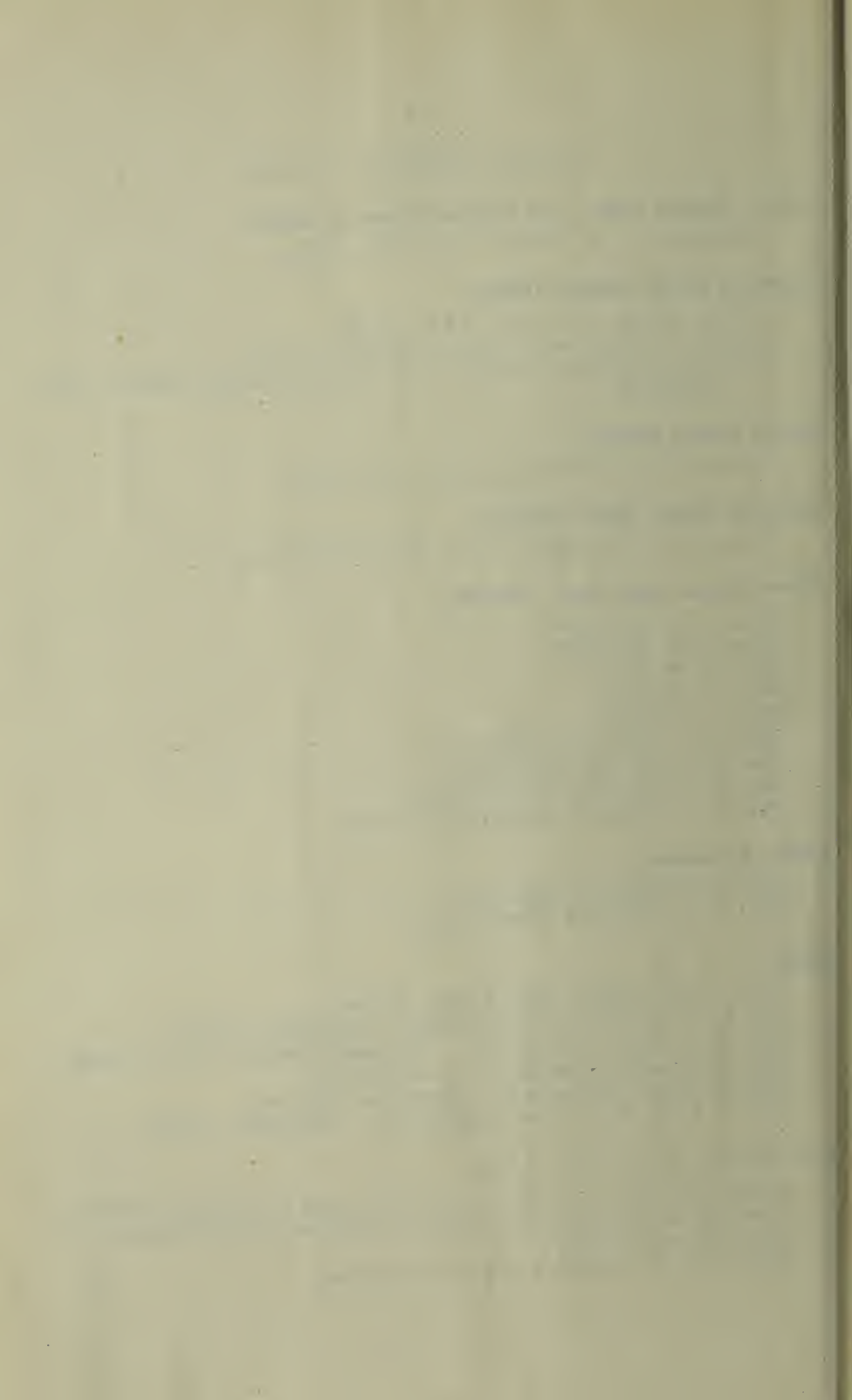
The following are on Active Service :—

ROBERT P. BOYD, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H. Glas., F.R.F.P.S.G. (Deputy M.O.H.).

CLIFFORD A. REYNOLDS, L.D.S. Eng. (Assistant Dental Surgeon).

RALPH BUDGE (Clerk).

Miss D. F. A. CHESNUTT (Dental Attendant).



Annual Report
OF THE
School Medical Officer
FOR THE
CITY AND COUNTY OF THE CITY OF EXETER,
1944.

To the Chairman and Members of the Education Committee.

I have the honour to submit my report upon the Medical Inspection of School Children for the year 1944. The report is again limited to certain matters specified by the Ministry, and the statistical material is curtailed.

(a) Staff.

As reported in greater detail in previous years, the whole of the professional staff takes part in the work of the Public Health Department as well as the School Medical Department. Changes are shown on the opposite page.

It will be observed that all members of the clerical staff are now temporary.

Health Visitors devote one-third of their time to school medical work. As the City is divided into health districts, the same nursing staff supervises the welfare of children from birth onwards. The same staff is also responsible for enquiries in connection with infectious disease, instead of leaving this duty to sanitary inspectors. This arrangement is becoming more widely adopted, but has obtained in Exeter for several years. There is much to be said in its favour. The health districts will require reconsideration after the war.

I desire to express my appreciation of the work of the Staff during the year, and to thank the Teachers for their co-operation.

(b) Changes in Arrangements for Medical, Dental and Cleanliness Inspections.

There have been no changes.

The Department is able to record a good volume of work in spite of the changes in the clerical staff. During the year

1943, the work was seriously disturbed by illness among members of the Staff and by the influenza epidemic towards the end of the year. Last year there was no such hindrance ; consequently the routine examinations in the prescribed age groups were completed. These examinations were double those of 1943 in a rather larger elementary school population, being 2,828 examinations among 7,301 children against 1,475 examinations among 6,813 children in 1943. The number of other routine inspections has increased, *i.e.*, at ages other than the prescribed groups, and the number of special examinations and follow-up examinations remains about the same. The additional examinations in the secondary schools reflects the increase in numbers at Hele's School and the Junior Technical School.

School clinic attendance figures were as follows :—

	1942.	1943.	1944.
Central Clinic	7,058	6,248	5,130
Western Clinic	4,616	6,463	3,992
Eastern Clinic	5,015	4,344	5,109
Dental Clinic	6,940	5,066	5,141

When Exeter ceased to be an official reception area, the services of the additional medical officer were terminated. Since then the Eastern and Western Branch Minor Ailment Clinics have been conducted by school nurses. Previously there was a doctor's day twice a week at each. Most of the cases seen are well within the competence of a state registered nurse. Comparatively few children have to be referred to the Central Clinic, hence the branch clinics continue to serve their main purpose, which was to prevent children having to make long journeys and waste much school time in order to attend the Central Clinic in Southernhay. A similar branch clinic is badly required in the northern part of the City.

The number of individual children found to be unclean was 1,181, giving a percentage of 16.2. This is almost the same as last year. Much of the trouble is due to a small number of difficult families. The standard is strict : one nit is recorded as an unclean head. Before the war the figure was round about 10 per cent. for several years.

During 1944, scabies showed a substantial and very welcome decline. I have never been convinced that treatment with benzol benzoate emulsion is satisfactory unless it is applied by a specially trained attendant, when excellent results may be obtained. For ordinary domiciliary treatment, sulphur ointment is preferred, with plain printed directions which any ordinary person can follow.

The following table shows the incidence of scabies in the schools for the past 12 years. The arrangements for treatment remain the same :—

INCIDENCE OF SCABIES FOR THE PAST 12 YEARS
IN EXETER SCHOOL CHILDREN.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Families.</i>	<i>Cases.</i>	<i>School Population.</i>
1944	229	538	7,301
1943	259	823	6,813
1942	245	707	7,003†
1941	468	950	9,796
1940	167	288	10,891
1939	20	53	7,764
1938	29	41	7,286
1937	29	42	7,422
1936	12	25	7,578
1935	10	22	7,796
1934	7	13	7,913
1933	9	16	7,500*

* Approximately.

† End of year ; actual population greater in first five months.

It will be seen that the rise began before the war and was greatly accelerated by the war.

(c) Additions to or Curtailment of the Arrangements for Various Forms of Treatment or the Provision of Solid Meals or Milk.

During the past year, 25 canteens have been in operation. The average number of meals served daily to schools is 1,550. The meals are cooked at the Paul Street Centre Kitchen, augmented by two temporary kitchens, one in St. Thomas and the other on the Burnthouse Lane Estate. It is expected that additional area kitchens will be open soon.

The cost of dinners is regulated according to the following scale :—

- 5d. for the first child ;
- 4d. for the second child ;
- 3d. for the third and remaining children.

Free meals are supplied to all necessitous children.

The dietetic value of the meals has risen in accordance with the Ministry's plan. Every effort is made to introduce variety within the limitations of war-time catering and the facilities available.

The most recent date selected for ascertaining the number of school meals served was the 23rd February, 1945. The figures were 87.13% for milk meals and 23.64% for solid meals. The comparable figures for 1944 were 90.2% for milk meals and 15.8% for solid meals; and for the previous year, 74.2% and 11.2% respectively.

EVACUATION AND RECEPTION.

During July, 946 unaccompanied school children and 102 accompanied children of various ages were received in the City. Of the latter number, 35 were of school age.

The Department also assisted in the reception and medical examination of a large number of children going to billets in the St. Thomas Rural District of the Administrative County.

At the end of the year there were 787 official and 91 unofficial evacuee school children in the City.

NUTRITION.

This has been discussed in some detail in recent reports. The figures given in the table on page 12 show a greater proportion of children in Category B (normal), with fewer in Category A (excellent) and Category C (slightly sub-normal) than in previous years. There are no children placed in Category D (bad). The result reflects the opinion of the medical officer who carried out most of the examinations of the routine age groups during the year, rather than any actual change in the nutrition of the children. At all events, there has been no appreciable falling off in the nutrition of the school population during the fifth year of the war. There may have been even improvement in some cases owing to school milk and school meals and the attention of the public to matters of diet. Unfortunately, it is the parents of children most in need who most often fail to make use of the advantages which the Government rationing scheme allows them.

CLOTHING on the whole is more satisfactory than might be expected, but boots often present a very real problem.

The Child Guidance Centre conducted by Dr. R. N. Craig and his team of assistants at Pilton House, continues to give most valuable assistance to the Education Committee in the investigation of difficult, unstable and delinquent children. During the year, 44 children were referred to the Centre, as against

37 in 1943 and 20 in 1942. Where home conditions are reasonably good, beneficial results are soon obtained, but when the home environment is unsatisfactory, the position is much more difficult and good results are less easily brought about and maintained. For some cases a period of treatment in small hostels organised so as to provide the right kind of family atmosphere, would seem to be the only course. Then, again, a small number of children—estimated by Dr. Craig at about one per cent. of all children seen—are suffering from mental derangement (psychosis). For these, there is no suitable provision anywhere at the present time.

SPEECH THERAPY CLASS.

Two sessions weekly are held by Miss J. M. Whitaker. At the end of 1943 there were 26 children attending. The number referred during 1944 was 13, and at the end of the year 22 remained on the register. This valuable work is deserving of more detailed notice in post-war reports.

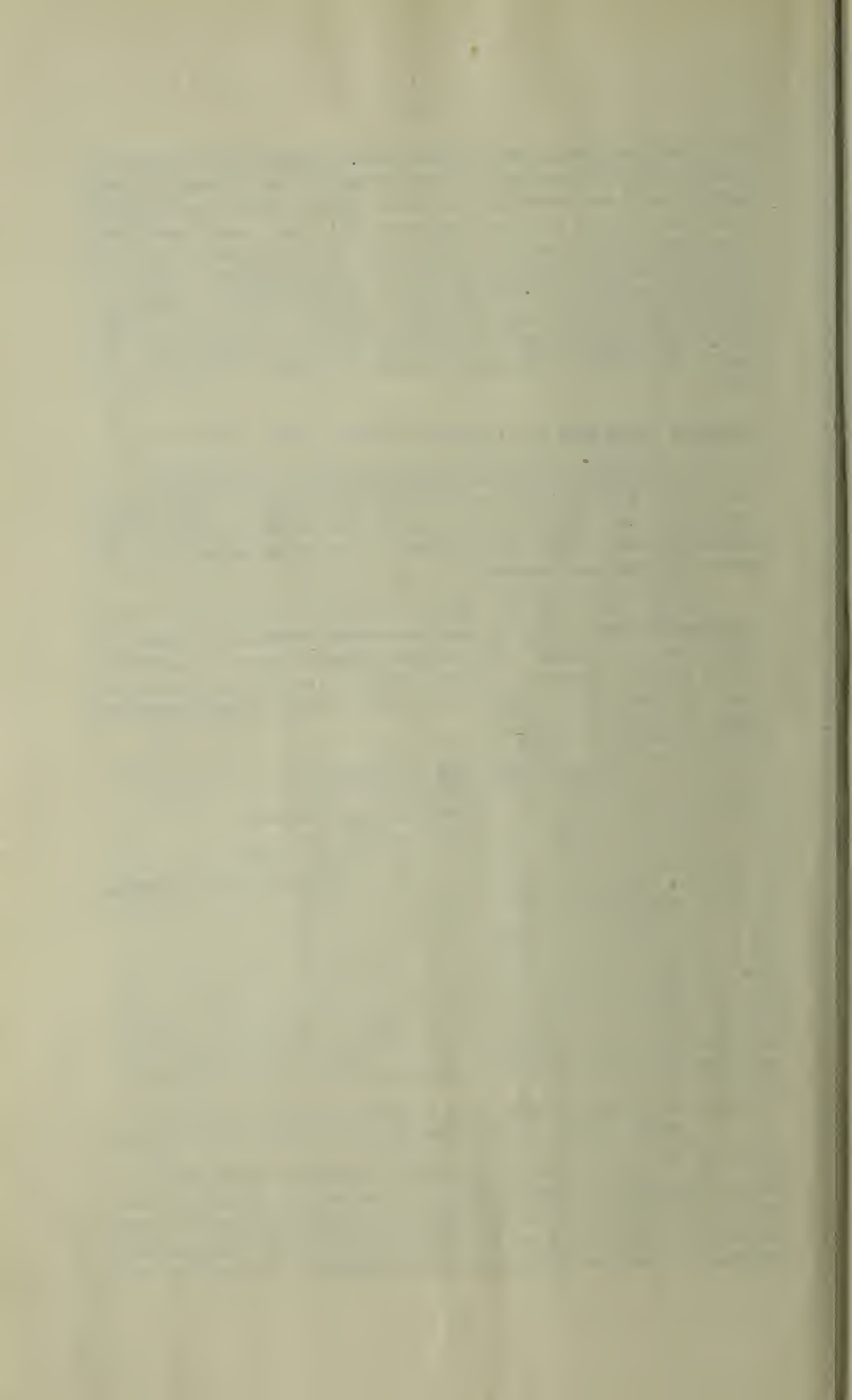
During the war the School Medical Services have been maintained and even increased in certain directions. Under the Education Act, 1944, the future presents great possibilities. There will be, however, a rather difficult transitional period and much ground work to be done before the full value of the new legislation can be realised.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

G. B. PAGE,

School Medical Officer.



STATISTICS.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, 1944.

Elementary School Population	.....	.....	7,301
No. of Elementary Schools	.....	.....	21
No. of Departments	.....	.....	31

TABLE I.

Medical Inspections and Treatment Returns, 1st January to 31st December, 1944.

A.—ROUTINE MEDICAL INSPECTIONS.

Number of Inspections in the prescribed Groups :—

Entrants	.....	.....	.....	1247
Second Age Group	.....	.....	.....	944
Third Age Group	.....	.....	.....	637
				Total
				..... 2,828

Number of other Routine Inspections 140

B.—OTHER INSPECTIONS.

Number of Special Inspections and Re-Inspections 4,271

TABLE II.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE NUTRITION OF CHILDREN
INSPECTED DURING THE YEAR IN THE ROUTINE
AGE GROUPS.

Age-Groups.	No. of Children In- spected.	A (Excellent)		B (Normal)		C (Slightly subnormal)		D (Bad)	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Entrants	1247	212	17.0	936	75.0	99	8.0	—	—
Second Age-Group	944	160	17.0	698	73.9	86	9.1	—	—
Third Age-Group	637	71	11.1	510	80.1	56	8.8	—	—
Other Routine In- spections	140	19	13.6	106	75.7	15	10.7	—	—
Total	2968	462	15.6	2250	75.8	256	8.6	—	—

*Group II.—Treatment of Defective Vision and Squint (excluding
Minor Eye Defects treated as Minor Ailments—Group I).*

	Number of Defects dealt with.		
	Under the Authority's Scheme.	Otherwise.	Total.
Errors of Refraction (including squint)	452	—	452
Other defect or diseases of the eyes	38	—	38
Total	490	—	490
No. of Children for whom spectacles were :—			
(A) Prescribed	314	—	314
(B) Obtained	309	—	309

Group I.—Treatment of Minor Ailments (excluding Uncleanliness, for which see Table V).

Total number of defects treated under the Authority's Scheme	1,957
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TABLE V.

VERMINOUS CONDITIONS.

(i) Average number of visits per school made during the year by the School Nurse	13
(ii) Total number of examinations of children in the Schools by the School Nurses	.....	.....	19,143
(iii) Number of <i>individual</i> children found unclean	.....	.....	1,181
(iv) Number of <i>individual</i> children cleansed under Section 87 (2) and (3) of the Education Act, 1921	.....	.....	55
(v) Number of cases in which legal proceedings were taken :—			
(a) Under the Education Act, 1921	.....	.....	<i>Nil</i>
(b) Under School Attendance Byelaws	.....	.....	<i>Nil</i>

TABLE VI.

BLIND AND DEAF CHILDREN.

Number of totally or almost totally blind and deaf children who are *not* at the present time receiving education suitable for their special needs. The return relates to all such children, including evacuees, resident in the Authority's area

Nil

MENTALLY DEFECTIVE CHILDREN.

Total number of children notified during the year ended 31st December, 1944, by the Local Education Authority to the Local Mental Deficiency Authority under the Mental Deficiency (Notification of Children) Regulations, 1928 :—

Educable at sixteen	.....	.....	4
Ineducable	.....	.....	2
			—
			6
			—

Group III.—Treatment of Defects of Nose and Throat.

NUMBER OF DEFECTS.

Received Operative Treatment.			
Under the Authority's Scheme, in Clinic or Hospital. (1)	By Private Practitioner or Hospital, apart from the Authority's Scheme. (2)	Received other forms of treatment. (3)	Total number treated. (4)
181	3	—	184

TABLE IV.

DENTAL INSPECTION AND TREATMENT.

(1) Number of children inspected by the Dentist.

(a) Routine age-groups—

Age	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total.
No.	—	279	606	847	795	743	805	761	784	719	373	60	25	7	6804

(b) Specials 449

(c) TOTAL (Routine and Specials) 7,253

(2) Number found to require treatment 3,182

(3) Number actually treated 2,324

(4) Attendances made by children for treatment 5,141

(5) Half-days devoted to :—

Inspection 59

Treatment 885

Total 944

(7) Extractions :—

Permanent Teeth 824

Temporary Teeth 4,228

Total 5,052

(8) Administration of general anaesthetics for extractions 1,480

(6) Fillings :—

Permanent Teeth 2,207

Temporary Teeth 332

Total 2,539

(9) Other Operations :—

Permanent Teeth 754

Temporary Teeth 270

Total 1,024

Secondary School

AND

Junior Technical School

1944

TABLE I.

Return of Medical Inspection, 1st January to 31st December, 1944.

INSPECTED :—

School.	Examinations.		Total.
	Complete.	Curtailed.	
Junior Technical (Boys)	103	—	103
Hele's (Boys)	248	229	477
Total	351	229	580

The number of boys at the Junior Technical School found to require treatment was 9 = 8.7%. Half of these were cases of defective vision.

The number of boys at Hele's School found to require treatment was 62 = 25%. One-third of these were cases of defective vision, requiring further examination or re-adjustment of spectacles.